

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) ~~An application~~ A data processing system adapted to run on a client apparatus connectable with a server across a network, said server adapted to simultaneously share information maintained therein with a plurality of heterogeneous clients, wherein said information comprises a plurality of ideas, said ~~application~~ apparatus comprising:

means for retrieving said ideas from said server;

means for defining a new idea in a manner dependent on the client apparatus platform, wherein the means for defining the new idea comprises:

means for creating at least one element declaration tuple that defines a element type and at least one attribute, wherein the element type is one of a thought, an image, a group, a relationship and a hierarchy;

means for creating at least one attribute declaration tuple that describes the at least one attribute associated with the element declaration tuple, wherein the at least one attribute defines an individual characteristic of the element type; and

means for creating at least one element tuple that describes the instance of the element declaration tuple; and

means for transmitting said new idea to said server for maintenance in a platform-independent manner.

2. (Currently amended) ~~An application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said application is interactive and includes:

means for rendering said retrieved ideas in a manner dependent on the client apparatus platform; and

means, responsive to user interaction, for manipulating said retrieved ideas.

3. (Currently amended) ~~An application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said application is non- interactive and includes:

means, responsive to new ideas of a pre-determined type transmitted to said server, for defining a search; and

wherein said defining means is responsive to said search results for encoding said results as ideas for transmittal by said transmitting means to said server.

4. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said ideas comprise at least one relationship idea having attributes defining a link between two other ideas and wherein said application includes means for defining a relationship between two ideas.

5. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of said ideas includes a name attribute.

6. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 2 wherein said ideas are ideas of one or more types and said means for defining is adapted to define ideas of a pre-determined type.

7. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 6 wherein said apparatus further comprises:

means, responsive to an idea of a new type being defined, for adapting said rendering means to render ideas of said new type.

8. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein said idea types comprises at least one of thoughts, images and groups of ideas.

9. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 6, comprising: means for subscribing to specified idea types such that said client application is informed when ideas of said type are transmitted to said server.

10. (Currently amended) An application apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein ideas of at least some of said idea types are defined as being adapted to contain ideas of at least one idea type.

11. (Currently amended) An ~~application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 10, comprising:

means for constructing a plurality of hierarchies of ideas;

means for moving ideas within a hierarchy according to said idea types; and

means for transferring ideas between hierarchies according to said idea types.

12. (Currently amended) An ~~application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 11, comprising:

means for selecting one of said rendered ideas; and

means for converting said one idea and any ideas below said one idea in a hierarchy to a markup document comprising definitions associated with any idea types of ideas within said hierarchy and definitions of any ideas within said hierarchy.

13. (Currently amended) An ~~application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 11 comprising:

means for loading a markup document comprising definitions associated with any idea types of ideas within a hierarchy of ideas in said document and definitions of any ideas within said hierarchy as new ideas.

14. (Currently amended) An ~~application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said markup document language is Extensible Markup Language (XML).

15. (Currently amended) An ~~application~~ apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for maintaining new ideas at the server stores said new ideas as tuples of a TupleSpace at said server.

16. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising computer program code stored on a computer readable storage medium, the program code ~~comprising an application as claimed in claim 1;~~

instructions for retrieving said ideas from said server;

instructions for defining a new idea in a manner dependent on the client apparatus platform, wherein the instructions for defining the new idea comprises:

instructions for creating at least one element declaration tuple that defines a element type and at least one attribute, wherein the element type is one of a thought, an image, a group, a relationship and a hierarchy;

instructions for creating at least one attribute declaration tuple that describes the at least one attribute associated with the element declaration tuple, wherein the at least one attribute defines an individual characteristic of the element type; and

instructions for creating at least one element tuple that describes the instance of the element declaration tuple; and

instructions for transmitting said new idea to said server for maintenance in a platform-independent manner.

17. (Currently amended) A method in ~~an application~~ a data processing system adapted to run on a client apparatus connectable with a server across a network, said server adapted to simultaneously share information maintained therein with a plurality of heterogeneous clients, wherein said information comprises a plurality of ideas, said method comprising the steps of:

retrieving said ideas from said server;

defining a new idea in a manner dependent on the client apparatus platform,

wherein defining the new idea comprises:

creating at least one element declaration tuple that defines a element type and at least one attribute, wherein the element type is one of a thought, an image, a group, a relationship and a hierarchy;

creating at least one attribute declaration tuple that describes the at least one attribute associated with the element declaration tuple, wherein the at least one attribute defines an individual characteristic of the element type; and

creating at least one element tuple that describes the instance of the element declaration tuple; and

transmitting said new idea to said server for maintenance in a platform-independent manner.